Cooperation on culture enriches contacts between societies and promotes cultural diversity and inter-cultural dialogue. At the same time, cultural and creative industries, craft-based SMEs and tourism can help stimulate economic growth. In line with the EU strategy on international and cultural relations, the EU supports a vibrant cultural sector in Armenia, which engages citizens, state actors and cultural operators alike, strengthens civil society and affords greater economic opportunities.

WHAT IS BEING DONE

PROMOTING CULTURE FOR A STRONGER ARMENIA

Fostering the role of culture and creativity in social and economic development

Promoting cultural cooperation through the EU’s flagship culture programme

Cultural heritage can be tangible (buildings, monuments, artworks, books), intangible (knowledge, skills, traditions, language), natural (landscapes, flora and fauna), or digital (resources created in digital form or digitalised to preserve them).

Cultural heritage has a universal value for us as individuals, communities and societies. It is important to preserve and pass on to future generations. While we may think of heritage as being ‘from the past’, it evolves as we engage with it, and has a key role to play in building the future.

On 20 March 2018, Armenia and the European Union signed an agreement for the participation of Armenia in Creative Europe, the EU’s flagship programme to support the cultural, creative and audiovisual sectors. Once the agreement is ratified by the Armenian parliament, Armenian cultural organisations will be able to participate fully in Creative Europe’s Culture programme, which supports projects in:

- cultural cooperation
- literary translation
- cultural networks
- platforms for cultural operators promoting emerging artists

During three years from February 2015 to January 2018, the Eastern Partnership Culture and Creativity Programme supported the role of culture and creativity in the social and economic development of the six Eastern Partner countries, including Armenia. The project’s website and resources remain online and are being maintained, including:

- key policy briefs and country resources developed by the programme
  www.culturepartnership.eu/en/article/list-of-publications
- 14 online training courses
  www.culturepartnership.eu/en/publishing/online-learning
- Eastern Partnership Cultural Observatory, an NGO set up by the programme to continue its policy work
  www.observatory.culturepartnership.eu

Find out more:
www.eapeculturepartnership.eu

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With EU funding from the Black Sea Basin Cross-Border Cooperation programme, the Black Sea Silk Road Corridor project brought together four countries – Greece, Turkey, Georgia and Armenia – in a common initiative to promote tourism, travel and shared culture.

- 3,000km tourist route from Thessaloniki in Greece to Meghri in Armenia
- support to development of 173 communities along the way, 43 of them in Armenia
- 42 green protected areas, 192 heritage sites marked, 382 information panels, 516 direction signs, 1,107 hiking trail markers
- Virtual Trail: Smart Phone App and business directory

Remote monasteries and majestic mountain landscapes: the Shirak region is well known for its heritage, but local communities are missing out on development opportunities. Under the EU-funded CHOICE project, a local NGO worked with local communities to involve residents in the preservation and revival of heritage monuments as a way of contributing to sustainable local development, including:

- training sessions involving 125 community representatives on protection of Shirak Province's historic and cultural heritage
- launch of a business incubator to support local business ideas contributing to heritage sector needs
- support to micro-enterprises in the production of traditional souvenirs and adornments, woollen blankets and embroideries, ethnic costumes

The Triple-E startup has received EU support from the SMEDA SME support project in Armenia to develop an augmented reality social platform. The app is now being used across a range of functions, including in the world of culture, with clients including the Mesrop Mashtots Institute of Ancient Manuscripts – Matenadaran, which holds one of the world's richest depositories of medieval manuscripts and books in Armenian and many other languages. Triple-E has also been signed up by the city of Zoetermeer in the Netherlands, where the local authorities are working with the Armenian startup to develop a virtual art project showcasing the city's artworks through an augmented reality experience.

Find out more:
- www.facebook.com/BlackSeaSilkRoad
- www.choiceproject.eu
- www.triplee.info